



General Assembly

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Fifty-sixth session
Third Committee
Agenda item 112
Advancement of women

Afghanistan, Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Cambodia, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gambia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malawi, Marshall Islands, Mexico, Monaco, Myanmar, Namibia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, San Marino, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Swaziland, Sweden, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Uruguay: draft resolution

Improvement of the status of women in the United Nations system

The General Assembly,

Recalling Articles 1 and 101 of the Charter of the United Nations, as well as Article 8, which provides that the United Nations shall place no restrictions on the eligibility of men and women to participate in any capacity and under conditions of equality in its principal and subsidiary organs,

Recalling also the goal, contained in the Platform for Action adopted by the Fourth World Conference on Women,¹ of achieving overall gender equality, particularly at the Professional level and above, by the year 2000 and the further actions and initiatives set out in the outcome document adopted by the General Assembly at its twenty-third special session, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century",²

¹ *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

² Resolution S-23/3, annex.



Recalling further its resolution 55/69 of 4 December 2000 on the improvement of the status of women in the United Nations system,

Taking note of Commission on Human Rights resolution 2001/50 of 24 April 2001³ on integrating the human rights of women throughout the United Nations system, in particular paragraph 13, in which the Commission recognizes that gender mainstreaming will strongly benefit from the enhanced and full participation of women, including at the higher levels of decision-making in the United Nations system,

Welcoming the decision of the Secretary-General to include, in the performance appraisal of managers, information on the opportunities presented for the selection of women candidates and on progress made in improving women's representation, including efforts made to identify women candidates,

Noting Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) of 31 October 2000 on women, peace and security,

Welcoming the proposed system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women, 2002-2005, as recommended to the Economic and Social Council by the Commission on the Status of Women at its forty-fifth session,⁴

Taking into account the continuing lack of representation or underrepresentation of women from certain countries, in particular from developing countries, including least developed countries and small island developing States, and from countries with economies in transition,

Taking note with appreciation of those departments and offices that have achieved the goal of gender balance, as well as of those departments that have met or exceeded the goal of 50 per cent in the selection of women candidates for vacant posts in the past year,

Welcoming the progress made in maintaining and improving the representation of women at some levels of the Secretariat, particularly in geographical appointments, and welcoming the fact that the percentage of women appointed and promoted in the Secretariat has been maintained or increased, but expressing concern that progress in improving the representation of women at the senior and policy-making levels has been negligible,⁵

Expressing concern that there are currently no women acting as special representatives or envoys,

Noting that the statistics on the representation of women in the organizations of the United Nations system are not fully up to date,

1. *Takes note with appreciation of the report of the Secretary-General and the actions described therein;⁶*

2. *Reaffirms the urgent goal of achieving 50/50 gender distribution in all categories of posts within the United Nations system, especially at senior and*

³ See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2001, Supplement No. 3 (E/2001/23)*, chap. II, sect. A.

⁴ See *ibid.*, Supplement No. 7 (E/2001/27), chap. I, sect. B, resolution 45/3.

⁵ See A/56/472, para. 9.

⁶ A/56/472.

policy-making levels, with full respect for the principle of equitable geographical distribution, in conformity with Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations, and also taking into account the continuing lack of representation or under-representation of women from certain countries, in particular from developing countries and countries with economies in transition;

3. *Welcomes:*

(a) The ongoing personal commitment of the Secretary-General to meeting the goal of gender equality and his assurance that gender balance will be given the highest priority in his continuing efforts to bring about a new management culture in the Organization, including full implementation of the special measures for the achievement of gender equality;⁷

(b) The pledge of the executive heads of the organizations of the United Nations system to intensify their efforts to meet the gender equality goals set out in the Beijing Declaration⁸ and Platform for Action;¹

(c) The inclusion of the objective of improving gender balance in action plans on human resources management for individual departments and offices, and encourages further cooperation, including the sharing of best-practice initiatives, between heads of departments and offices, the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women and the Office of Human Resources Management of the Secretariat in the implementation of those plans, which include specific targets and strategies for improving the representation of women in individual departments;

(d) The continuing designation of focal points for women in United Nations peacekeeping operations, and requests the Secretary-General to ensure that the focal points are designated at a sufficiently high level and enjoy full access to senior management in the mission area and at Headquarters;

(e) The continued provision of specific training programmes on gender mainstreaming and gender issues in the workplace, tailored to meet the special needs of individual departments, commends those heads of departments and offices who have launched gender training for their managers and staff, and strongly encourages those who have not yet organized such training to do so by the end of the biennium;

4. *Regrets* that the goal of 50/50 gender distribution was not met by the end of the year 2000, and urges the Secretary-General to redouble his efforts to realize significant progress towards this goal in the near future;

5. *Expresses* concern that, in five departments and offices of the Secretariat, women still account for less than 30 per cent of staff,⁹ and encourages the Secretary-General to intensify his efforts to meet the goal of gender balance within all departments and offices of the Secretariat;

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General, in order to achieve and maintain the goal of 50/50 gender distribution with full respect for the principle of equitable geographical distribution, in conformity with Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter:

⁷ ST/AI/1999/9.

⁸ *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution I, annex I.

⁹ See A/56/472, para. 11.

(a) To develop innovative recruitment strategies to identify and attract suitably qualified women candidates, particularly from and in developing countries and countries with economies in transition, other Member States that are unrepresented or under-represented in the Secretariat and in occupations in which women are under-represented;

(b) To encourage the United Nations system, its agencies and departments to make more effective use of existing information technology resources and systems and other established methods to disseminate information about employment opportunities for women and to better coordinate rosters of potential women candidates;

(c) To continue to monitor closely the progress made by departments and offices in meeting the goal of gender balance, to ensure that the appointment and promotion of suitably qualified women will be not less than 50 per cent of all appointments and promotions until the goal of 50/50 gender distribution is met, including through full implementation of the special measures for women, and to effectively encourage, monitor and assess the performance of managers in meeting targets for improving women's representation;

(d) To enable the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women to monitor effectively and facilitate progress in the implementation of the strategic action plans for the achievement of gender balance and the special measures for women, including by ensuring access to the information required to carry out that work;

(e) To intensify his efforts to create, within existing resources, a gender-sensitive work environment supportive of the needs of his staff, both women and men, including through the development of policies for flexible working time, flexible workplace arrangements and child-care and elder-care needs, as well as through the provision of more comprehensive information to prospective candidates and new recruits on employment opportunities for spouses, the provision of support for the activities of women's networks and organizations within the United Nations system and the expansion of gender-sensitivity training in all departments, offices and duty stations;

(f) To strengthen further the policy against harassment, including sexual harassment by, inter alia, ensuring the full implementation of the guidelines for its application at Headquarters and in the field, including in peacekeeping operations;

7. *Strongly encourages* the Secretary-General to renew his efforts to appoint more women as special representatives and envoys to pursue good offices on his behalf, especially in matters related to peacekeeping, peace-building, preventative diplomacy and economic and social development, as well as in operational activities, including appointment as resident coordinators, and to appoint more women to other high-level positions;

8. *Encourages* the Secretary-General and the executive heads of the organizations of the United Nations system to continue to develop common approaches for retaining women, promoting inter-agency mobility and improving career development opportunities;

9. *Encourages* the United Nations and Member States to continue to implement the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly,

entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century", pertaining to the improvement of the status of women in the United Nations system;²

10. *Strongly encourages* Member States:

(a) To support the efforts of the United Nations and the specialized agencies to achieve the goal of 50/50 gender distribution, especially at senior and policy-making levels, by identifying and regularly submitting more women candidates for appointment to positions in the United Nations system, by identifying and proposing national recruitment sources that will assist the organizations of the United Nations system in identifying suitable women candidates, in particular from developing countries and countries with economies in transition, and by encouraging more women to apply for positions within the Secretariat, the specialized agencies, funds and programmes and the regional commissions, including in areas in which women are under-represented, such as peacekeeping, peace-building and other non-traditional areas;

(b) To identify women candidates for assignment to peacekeeping missions and to improve the representation of women in military and civilian police contingents;

(c) To identify and regularly submit more women candidates for appointment or election to intergovernmental, expert and treaty bodies;

(d) To identify and nominate more women candidates for appointment or election as judges or other senior officials in international courts and tribunals;

11. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report on the implementation of the present resolution, including by providing up-to-date statistics on the number and percentage of women in all organizational units and at all levels throughout the United Nations system, and on the implementation of departmental action plans for the achievement of gender balance, to the Commission on the Status of Women at its forty-sixth session and to the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session.



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Agenda item 112
Advancement of women

Afghanistan, Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Botswana, Brazil, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, Colombia, the Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Egypt, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kenya, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, San Marino, Senegal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uruguay, Venezuela, Zambia and Zimbabwe: draft resolution

Traditional or customary practices affecting the health of women and girls

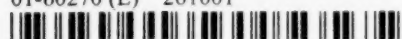
The General Assembly,

Reaffirming its resolution 54/133 of 17 December 1999 and its other relevant resolutions and decisions, and bearing in mind those of the Economic and Social Council, the Commission on Human Rights and the Subcommission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights,

Recalling the reports of the Special Rapporteur of the Subcommission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights on traditional practices affecting the health of women and children¹ and of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on violence against women, its causes and consequences,²

¹ A/56/____.

² A/56/____.



Reaffirming the obligation of all States to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms as stated in the Charter of the United Nations, and emphasizing also the obligations contained in human rights instruments, in particular articles 5 and 12 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,³ article 24 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child⁴ and article 12 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,⁵

Bearing in mind article 2, paragraph (a), of the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women,⁶ and article 5, paragraph 5, of the Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief,⁷

Recalling the provisions pertaining to traditional or customary practices affecting the health of women and girls contained in the outcome of the World Conference on Human Rights,⁸ the International Conference on Population and Development,⁹ the Fourth World Conference on Women,¹⁰ and the twenty-first,¹¹ twenty-third¹² and twenty-sixth¹³ special sessions of the General Assembly,

Taking note of general recommendation 14 concerning female circumcision adopted by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women at its ninth session,¹⁴ paragraphs 11, 20 and 24 (l) of general recommendation 19 concerning violence against women adopted by the Committee at its eleventh session,¹⁵ paragraphs 15 (d) and 18 of general recommendation 24 concerning article 12 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women on women and health adopted by the Committee at its twentieth session¹⁶ and paragraphs 21, 35 and 51 of general comment No. 14 (2000) concerning article 12 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, adopted by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights at its twenty-second session,¹⁷

Reaffirming that harmful traditional or customary practices, including female genital mutilation, constitute a serious threat to the health of women and girls, and may have fatal consequences,

³ Resolution 34/180, annex.

⁴ Resolution 44/25, annex.

⁵ See resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

⁶ Resolution 48/104.

⁷ Resolution 36/55.

⁸ See A/CONF.157/24 (Part I), chap. III.

⁹ See *Report of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 5-13 September 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XIII.18), chap. I, resolution I, annex.

¹⁰ See *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution I, annexes I and II.

¹¹ Resolution S-21/2.

¹² Resolutions S-23/2 and S-23/3.

¹³ Resolution S-26/2.

¹⁴ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 38 (A/45/38 and Corr.1)*, chap. IV, para. 438.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, *Forty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 38 (A/47/38)*, chap. I.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, *Fifty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 38 (A/54/38/Rev.1)*, part one, chap. I, sect. A.

¹⁷ See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2001, Supplement No. 22 (E/2001/22)*, annex IV.

Expressing concern at the continuing large-scale existence of these practices,

Reaffirming that such harmful traditional or customary practices constitute a definite form of violence against women and girls and a serious violation of their human rights,

Emphasizing that the elimination of harmful traditional or customary practices will contribute to reducing the vulnerability of women and girls to HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections,

Stressing that the elimination of such practices requires greater efforts and commitment from Governments, the international community and civil society, including non-governmental and community-based organizations, and that fundamental changes in societal attitudes are required,

Taking note with appreciation of the work done in the context of the Organization of African Unity to prepare a draft protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa,

Welcoming the call for the elimination of all harmful traditional practices which are detrimental to girls' and women's rights and health made by the Pan-African Forum on the Future of Children, which was held in Cairo from 28 to 31 May 2001,¹⁸

1. *Welcomes:*

(a) The report of the Secretary-General,¹⁹ which provides encouraging examples of national and international developments;

(b) The efforts undertaken by United Nations bodies, programmes and organizations, including the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Population Fund, the World Health Organization, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Development Fund for Women and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, to address the issue of traditional or customary practices affecting the health of women and girls, and encourages them to continue to coordinate their efforts;

(c) The work carried out by the Special Ambassador for the Elimination of Female Genital Mutilation of the United Nations Population Fund, and her continuing contribution to the campaign to eliminate female genital mutilation;

(d) The work carried out by the Inter-African Committee on Traditional Practices Affecting the Health of Women and Children and other non-governmental and community organizations, including women's organizations, in raising awareness of the harmful effects of such practices, in particular of female genital mutilation;

(e) The fact that the elimination of harmful traditional or customary practices will be considered during the twenty-seventh special session of the General Assembly on children;²⁰

2. *Emphasizes* the need for technical and financial assistance to those developing countries working to achieve the elimination of traditional or customary

¹⁸ See A/S-27/4, annex, para. 32 (g).

¹⁹ A/56/316.

²⁰ See A/AC.256/CRP.6/Rev.3, para. 41.

practices affecting the health of women and girls from United Nations fund and programmes, international and regional financial institutions and bilateral and multilateral donors, as well as the need for assistance to non-governmental organizations and community-based groups active in this field from the international community;

3. *Calls upon* all States:

(a) To ratify or accede to, if they have not yet done so, the relevant human rights treaties, in particular the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women³ and the Convention on the Rights of the Child,⁴ to consider signing and ratifying or acceding to the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women²¹ and to respect and implement fully their obligations under any such treaties to which they are parties;

(b) To implement the international commitments made at relevant major United Nations conferences and special sessions and summits of the General Assembly held since 1990 and their follow-up processes;

(c) To collect and disseminate basic data about the occurrence of traditional or customary practices affecting the health of women and girls, including female genital mutilation;

(d) To develop, adopt and implement national legislation, policies, plans and programmes that prohibit traditional or customary practices affecting the health of women and girls, including female genital mutilation, and to prosecute the perpetrators of such practices;

(e) To establish, if they have not done so, a concrete national mechanism for the implementation and monitoring of relevant legislation, law enforcement and national policies;

(f) To establish or strengthen support services to respond to the needs of victims by, inter alia, developing comprehensive and accessible sexual and reproductive health services and by providing training to health-care providers at all levels on the harmful health consequences of such practices;

(g) To address specifically in the training of health and other relevant personnel traditional or customary practices affecting the health of women and girls, also addressing the increased vulnerability of women and girls to HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections due to such practices;

(h) To take all necessary measures to empower women and strengthen their economic independence and protect and promote the full enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms in order to allow women and girls to better protect themselves from, inter alia, traditional or customary practices affecting the health of women and girls;

(i) To intensify efforts to raise awareness of and to mobilize international and national public opinion concerning the harmful effects of traditional or customary practices affecting the health of women and girls, including female genital mutilation, inter alia, by involving public opinion leaders, educators,

²¹ Resolution 54/4, annex.

religious leaders, chiefs, traditional leaders, medical practitioners, teachers, women's health and family planning organizations, social workers, child care agencies, relevant non-governmental organizations, the arts and the media in awareness-raising campaigns, in order to achieve the total elimination of these practices;

(j) To address traditional or customary practices affecting the health of women and girls in education curricula, as appropriate;

(k) To promote men's understanding of their roles and responsibilities with regard to promoting the elimination of harmful practices, such as female genital mutilation;

(l) To continue to take specific measures to increase the capacity of communities, including immigrant and refugee communities, in which female genital mutilation is practised, to engage in activities aimed at preventing and eliminating such practices;

(m) To explore, through consultations with communities and religious and cultural groups and their leaders, alternatives to harmful traditional or customary practices, in particular where those practices form part of a ritual ceremony or rite of passage, as well as through alternative training and education possibilities for traditional practitioners;

(n) To cooperate closely with the Special Rapporteur of the Subcommission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights on traditional practices affecting the health of women and the girl child, in particular by supplying all necessary information requested by her and by giving serious consideration to inviting her to visit their countries;

(o) To cooperate closely with relevant specialized agencies and United Nations funds and programmes, as well as with regional intergovernmental organizations, as appropriate, and relevant community and non-governmental organizations, including women's organizations, in a joint effort to eradicate traditional or customary practices affecting the health of women and girls;

(p) To include in their reports to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, the Committee on the Rights of the Child and other relevant treaty bodies specific information on measures taken to eliminate traditional or customary practices affecting the health of women and girls, including female genital mutilation, and to prosecute the perpetrators of such practices;

4. *Invites:*

(a) Relevant specialized agencies, United Nations bodies, regional intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations to exchange information on the subject of the present resolution, and encourages the exchange of such information between non-governmental organizations active in this field and the bodies monitoring the implementation of relevant human rights treaties;

(b) The Commission on the Status of Women to address this subject at its forty-seventh session under the priority theme "Women's human rights, and elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls as defined in the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome document of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly";

(c) Governments, organizations and individuals that are in a position to do so to contribute to the trust fund that supports the work of the Special Ambassador for the Elimination of Female Genital Mutilation of the United Nations Population Fund;

5. *Requests* the Secretary-General:

(a) To continue to make his report available to relevant meetings within the United Nations system;

(b) To report to the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session on the implementation of the present resolution, with a special focus on recent national and international developments, including examples of national best practices and international cooperation.
